

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Children
Minister for Disability



Thursday, 15 February 2024

NEW KINDER DELIVERS FOR KIDS IN BALLARAT'S WEST

Children and families in Ballarat's fast-growing western suburbs now have access to a great new kindergarten and community hub, thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn joined Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison yesterday to officially open the Alfredton Community Hub (interim name) with the help of some of Ballarat's littlest learners.

The new community hub offers up to 99 kindergarten places across three rooms, giving more local children access to two years of quality play-based learning close to home.

The purpose-built facility also includes two community rooms, a meeting room, and staff facilities – creating spaces for council-run child and family services such as sleep and settling programs, Parent Place Outreach services, and supported and community-based playgroups.

Local community groups can also use the meeting spaces for education, training, events and social connections.

The Labor Government contributed \$2.25 million to the new community hub, supporting the City of Ballarat to deliver the project through a Building Blocks Capacity Building grant. The kinder is one of 60 new or expanded services to open in 2024.

The Labor Government is investing billions to build and expand hundreds of kindergartens across the state, supporting the delivery of 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten each week by 2029 and 30 hours of Pre-Prep each week by 2032.

Through the nation-leading \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* reforms, early childhood education is being transformed to help children thrive, save families money and support parents – especially women – to return to work or study if they choose.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"Families in Ballarat's west now have access to a great new kinder and community hub, delivering quality early childhood education and vital child and family services to parents and carers in Alfredton."

"We're investing billions through our Best Start, Best Life reforms to build, modernise and expand kindergartens right across Victoria, so more families can access and attend a quality kinder close to home."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"Every child deserves the best start in life – I'm so proud that children and families in Alfredton now have more convenient access to high-quality kindergarten and family services, close to home."